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Edward Edinger M.D.

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Paracelsus and the Age of Aquarius

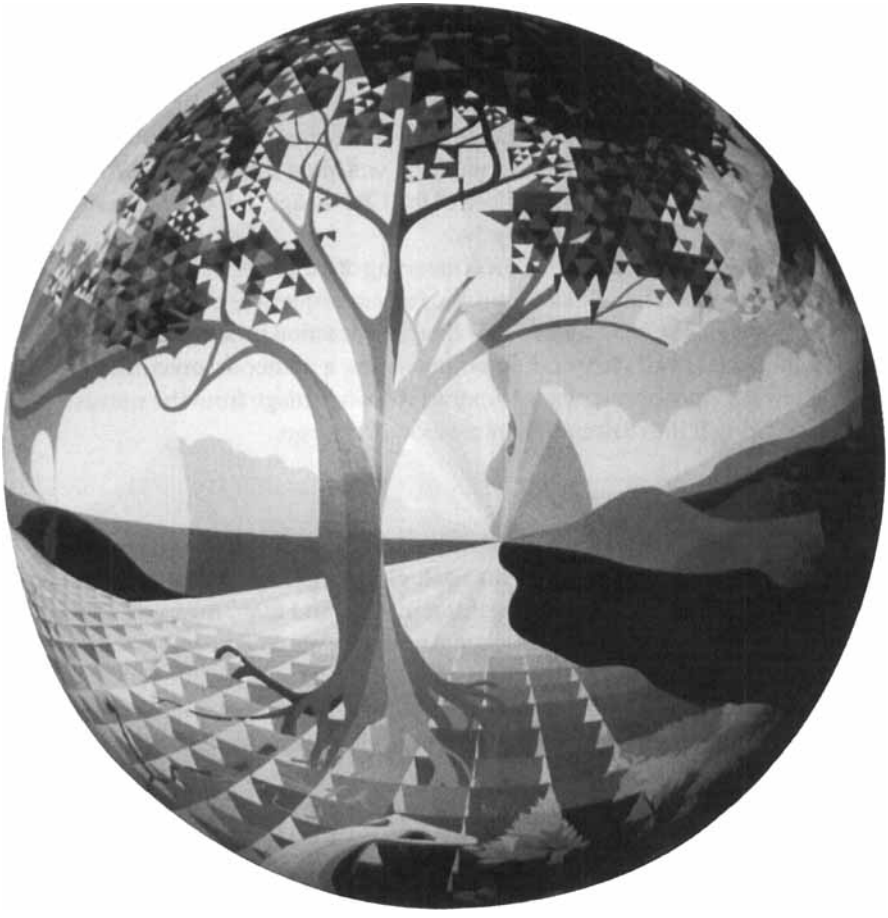
Edward Edinger

I must begin with a confession. I have not made a serious study of Paracelsus. To be candid about it, it's been hard for me to like Paracelsus. He makes so little effort to accommodate the needs of his readers. He uses obscure neologisms of his own construction, doesn't always explain them, and lets readers figure them out as best they can. Furthermore, his temperament is violent and contentious—and those qualities are distasteful to me. But the fact is that Paracelsus had need of such qualities. He was dealing with psychic factors of such a magnitude that he was fortunate to retain his sanity. Certainly he is one of the great-souled ones of history, and that makes him worthy of our attention. However, my primary reason for focusing on Paracelsus is that he was important to Jung. In his *Memories* Jung writes:

> The writings of Paracelsus contain a wealth of original ideas, including clear formulation of the questions posed by alchemists, though these are set forth in late and baroque dress. Through Paracelsus I was finally led to discuss the nature of alchemy in relation to religion and psychology—or, to put it another way, of alchemy as a form of religious philosophy. This I did in *Psychology and Alchemy* (1944). Thus I had at last reached the ground which underlay my own experiences of the years 1913-1917 [the time of Jung's confrontation with the unconscious]; for the process through which I had passed at that time corresponded to the process of alchemical transformation discussed in that book. (p. 209)

Because of my limited knowledge of Paracelsus, I am not competent to engage in a comprehensive survey of his work. I can only offer personal

This is an edited version of a lecture given under the auspices of the C.G. Jung Foundation of New York in 1994.



"Eye am the Vanishing Point," Dick Termes

reflections on his place in the evolution of the Western collective psyche and on his significance for depth psychology. Indeed, I really have just three basic ideas to convey. The first one concerns Paracelsus' main symbolic image—his concept of the lower heaven—which is of overwhelming importance in his writings. He also calls it "star," "light to be found in nature," and "iliaster." (His pupil, Gerhard Dorn, even went so far as to write an alchemical recipe whereby this lower heaven could be extracted from matter.)

The second idea is that Paracelsus is representative of 16th-century man. His concept of the lower heaven was very relevant to the larger issues astir in the collective psyche of his time. The 16th century was a momentous period in the history of the Western world. It was then that heaven, which heretofore had been the dwelling-place of the God-image, fell out of the sky into matter, and into the human psyche.

The third idea is the psychological meaning of the lower heaven. Depth psychology recognizes and elaborates the full consequences of this change in the God-image. We can now see how Dorn's extraction procedure—using matter, chemicals, and chemical apparatus—was a symbolic precursor to depth analysis, whose basic aim is to extract the God-image from the unconscious and bring it into full conscious relation to the ego.

The Lower Heaven: "Stars in Us"

Jung tells us that the word *iliaster*, which Paracelsus used synonymously with *lower heaven*, is one of his neologisms and is probably a combination of two Greek words: *hyle*, meaning matter; and *aster*, meaning star. So iliaster would mean the *star-in-matter*. Another related name given to the same concept is *lumen naturae*, the light of nature. This refers to the wisdom and vision that comes from below rather than above, from matter and nature rather than the upper regions of the spirit or divine revelation as dispensed by the Church.

Paracelsus was gripped by the archetype of heaven, which in earlier ages was projected onto the sky, so that *heaven* and *sky* were synonymous. As soon as we start talking about a *lower* heaven, then we know that the archetype has fallen out of the sky—sky and heaven are no longer the same, and the psychic content that had been projected onto the sky is now starting to be withdrawn. Jung says: "In his conception of the inner heaven he glimpsed an eternal primordial image, which was implanted in him and in all men, and recurs at all times and places." Jung also quotes Paracelsus as saying: "The heavens are a spirit and a vapour in which we live just like a bird in time. Not only the stars or the moon, etc., constitute the heavens, but

also there are stars in us, and these which are in us and which we do not see constitute the heavens also." (*CW* 15, par. 31) For Paracelsus, this inner heaven is the major source of knowledge. Jung gives Paracelsus high praise for this insight:

> The firmament is not merely the cosmic heaven, but a body which is a part or a content of the human body . . . . The firmamental body is the corporeal equivalent of the astrological heaven. [What he calls a *corpus sydereum*—star body—] is the source of illumination by the *lumen naturae*, the "natural light," which plays the greatest possible role not only in the writing of Paracelsus but in the whole of his thought. This intuitive conception is, in my opinion, an achievement of the utmost historical importance, for which no one should grudge Paracelsus undying fame. (*CW* 15, par. 29)

As with every major archetypal image, the image of heaven clusters around itself a whole symbol system of associated images and ideas. This is the nature of an archetypal image: It functions like a magnetic field. I am rather fond of charting that kind of phenomenon because it helps me to visualize, all at once, the entire network of associated images. So I have constructed a chart that presents some of these associated images that cluster around the archetypal image of heaven.

The first association that comes to mind in response to the notion of heaven is the image of the sky. As long as the physical sky and the psychic content of heaven are merged in the psyche, the sky will carry the projection—or will function as the projection screen, so to speak—of this entire symbol system. What we're actually looking for, then, is not the phenomenon of the physical sky but of the collective unconscious, which has been projected onto the sky. The chief attributes contained in this projection are transcendence of this burdensome earth, destiny, paradise, the afterlife, eternity, infinity, dwelling-place of the deity. The prayer, the Pater Noster, begins, "Our Father who art in heaven." And in the teachings of Christ, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven were synonymous. They meant exactly the same thing because *the sky and the psychic contents were not distinguished.* The wind was the spirit; thunder and lightning, the dynamic manifestations of the divine presence, were the source of all grace and revelation. All these sacred associations belong to the symbol system of this archetype of heaven. And this is the grand entity that has finally fallen down to earth—thanks, in large part, to Paracelsus—and has become available for

"What Paracelsian imagery implied,
and what Jungian psychology has made explicit,
is that the supposed separation between heaven and earth
that leaves the body behind is unsatisfactory,
leaving us in a chronic disassociated state
that the modern mind will no longer accept.
The modern mind requires wholeness,
and that means that the body has to be redeemed—
egohood, the earth, and matter itself, have to be redeemed."

extraction out of matter by those alchemists who followed Paracelsus. This is an amazing image: Heaven is now within the grasp of humanity. And the alchemists, if they do their work right, can get a hold of it, heaven itself. It is a very big deal.

Historically, the image of heaven goes back to the earliest cosmologies, which began with the idea that the original chaos gave way to a separation of heaven and earth; those were the two antithetical elements. Psychologically, we understand earth to refer to the ego because earth is where humanity lives, and it is out of earth that flesh is born.

So, psychologically speaking, the beginning is a birth of ego consciousness and separateness out of what had previously been nothing but unconscious deity. Early on, humans attributed transpersonal powers to the sky. According to scholar A.B. Cook, in primitive Greek religion Zeus was conceived of as the animate or living bright sky. It was only later that Zeus took on his anthropomorphic aspects and gradually evolved from being the *sky as a whole* to being, specifically, the *sky god.* Cook makes a very interesting observation in this regard: "The shift from sky to sky god was a momentous fact, a fact which modified the whole course of Greek religion, and its ultimate consequence was nothing less than the rise of faith in a personal god, the ruler and father of all." (*Vol.* I, p. 9)

This historical sequence has a very interesting parallel in the psychological development of the individual in relation to the collective unconscious.

In the course of analysis, one's first encounters with one's own psychic contents correspond to recognizing the transpersonal dimension as being something like the diffuse sky. We call it the collective unconscious, with its contents of the archetypes, but there is a diffuseness about it. It is only later, with further development, that this diffuse numinosity is focused down to an awareness of an individual unified essence of the collective unconscious—the Self. This sequence happens quite regularly in analysis. I find it very interesting that Cook makes the same observation in regard to the course of historical development.

Quite early on, humankind began to think of itself as the offspring of both heaven and earth. Orphic gold tablets, dug up from graves dating back to the second or third century B.C., contained instructions for the deceased as to how to negotiate their way past the gatekeepers into paradise. Those Orphic gold tablets instructed the deceased to say:

> "I am a child of Earth and the Starry Heaven,
> but my race is of Heaven alone."

Such imagery corresponds to the widely held belief, general at the time and extending historically for centuries, that death brings about a final *separatio* between the soul and the body. The soul was thought to have its parentage in heaven, and the body was something that had to be endured for a while. With death, the body was cast off and, freed of that inconvenience, one could return to one's original spiritual, heavenly nature. The end result, then, would be a final separation of body and soul.

This is a far cry from the Paracelsian notion of the heaven within matter itself. What Paracelsian imagery implied, and what Jungian psychology has made explicit, is that the supposed separation between heaven and earth that leaves the body behind is unsatisfactory, leaving us in a chronic disassociated state that the modern mind will no longer accept. The modern mind requires wholeness, and that means that the body has to be redeemed—egohood, the earth, and matter itself, have to be redeemed. The earlier religious symbol systems did not attempt this integration. Alchemy started to work on it, and depth psychology has carried it to completion, a whole new world view.

As Jung tells us, the alchemical notion of Mercurius is essentially synonymous with Paracelsus' idea of the lower heaven. Mercurius is to be found in the darkness of matter. It is a spirit, a light, that does not derive from heaven but is generated out of the earth and comes about through human efforts. This notion contrasts greatly with the message of Christ who,

as an emissary from the upper heavens, descends to earth to acquaint humankind with the higher realm and hopefully lead everyone back to heaven.

As Jung points out, alchemy provided a compensatory counterpoint to the Christian cosmology in the figure of Mercurius, which manifests from below as the son of the world of matter. This view of spirit coming from below completes the spirit of Christ coming from above. In *Psychology and Alchemy*, Jung says:

> With the incarnation of Christ . . . the higher, the spiritual, the masculine inclines to the lower, the earthly, the feminine; and accordingly, the mother, who was anterior to the world of the father, accommodates herself to the male principle. And she does that by producing a son rather than producing a daughter. And so with the aid of the human spirit, alchemy, she produces a son who is not the antithesis of Christ, but rather his chthonic counterpart. Not a divine man, but a fabulous being conforming to the nature of the primordial mother. And just as the redemption of man, the microcosm, is the task of the upper son, which is Christ, so the lower son has the function of the savior of the macrocosm. (par. 26)

Jung is saying that, to be the savior of the macrocosm is to be the redeemer of the *world*, of matter itself. Christ would pluck humankind out of the world and help us find our way back to his heavenly origin, leaving the world to its hell. Instead, the alchemical savior of the greater world is going to redeem the world of *matter*. Psychologically, this refers to the redemption of ego-hood, which does not get very good press in the Christian and gnostic symbol systems. To contemplate the redemption of the carnal ego is no small undertaking.

Paracelsus: A 16th-Century Man

From the standpoint of archetypal history, it is highly significant that the legendary figure of Dr. Faustus lived contemporaneously with Paracelsus. Faustus' dates are generally given as 1480-1540; Paracelsus', 1493-1541—almost exactly the same. In fact, it has been widely surmised that Paracelsus himself was the actual Dr. Faustus. Paracelsus' connection with the Faust legend establishes him as perhaps the preeminent historical figure who anticipates the predicament of the modern psyche. I think this helps to explain why Jung found both Faust and Paracelsus so very relevant to his

own life and work.

Like Faust, Paracelsus courted inflation. When depth psychologists encounter this attribute, we shudder with the knowledge of the danger. For example, consider Paracelsus' famous remark (*CW* 13, par. 151):

> "I under the Lord, the Lord under me. I under him outside my office, he under me outside his office."

That is pretty dangerous stuff, but it is characteristic of the 16th-century mentality. As Jung elaborates in his book *Aion*, the 16th century was a crucial transition point in the unfolding of the Christian eon; it was a kind of watershed in the evolution of the Western psyche, in what might be called the collective individuation process of Western humanity. It was at this point that the process of replacing the figure of Christ, who had been the dominant of the first millennium, with the figure of the AntiChrist, the dominant of the second millennium, began in earnest. And by 1500, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the great geographical explorations, and the scientific revolution were all underway.

What had happened psychologically to bring about all these tremendous, energizing changes was that the God-image had fallen out of the sky and into the human psyche. In other words, the God-image was no longer mediated or contained by the metaphysical system of the Church. The transpersonal energies contained in the God-image thus became more available to the human ego which, now mobilized by these energies, engaged in new explorations of all kinds. A vast expansion of ego consciousness manifested in all fields of endeavor. At the same time, a secular rationalistic inflation and hubris also appeared that have finally culminated in the desperate plight of our modern world, which is tottering on the brink of apocalyptic catastrophe. And it is out of this desperate plight that depth psychology has been born.

Of course, for the 16th-century person, these developments all lay in the future. The immediate effect of the fall of the God-image out of the sky was a tremendous upsurge in human confidence. This state of affairs was well described by Pico Della Mirandola in *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, which was written in 1486. Russell Kirk comments on this Renaissance document:

> Pico's *Dignity of Man* is the manifesto of humanism: man regenerate. This visibly is the primary meaning of the Renaissance, the rebirth of man in the likeness of God. The man of the Middle Ages was humble, conscious of his almost always

> fallen and sinful nature, feeling himself a miserable foul creature watched by an angry God. Through pride fell the angels, but Pico and his brother humanists declared man was only a little lower than the angels, being capable of descending to unclean depths, indeed, but also having within his power to become godlike. How marvelous and splendid a creature is man. This theme of Pico's oration was elaborated with all the pomp . . . that begins to characterize the rising humanist teachings. In this idea there lay a colossal hubris unknown to the Middle Ages, but also a tremendous spiritual impulse such as only modern times can show. (p. xiii*f*)

What Kirk calls "a tremendous spiritual impulse" has culminated in what Jung describes as the psychology of modern man and modern woman[1]:

> . . . The man we call modern, the man who is aware of the immediate present, is by no means the average man . . . . The man who has attained consciousness of the present is solitary. The "modern" man has at all times been so, for every step towards fuller consciousness removes him further from his original, purely animal *participation mystique* with the herd, from submersion in a common unconsciousness. Every step forward means tearing oneself loose from the maternal womb of unconsciousness in which the mass of men dwells. Even in a civilized community the people who form, psychologically speaking, the lowest stratum live in a state of unconsciousness little different from that of primitives. Those on the succeeding strata live on a level of consciousness that corresponds to the beginnings of human culture, while those of the highest stratum have a consciousness that reflects the light of the last few centuries. Only the man who is modern in our meaning of the term really lives in the present; he alone has a present-day consciousness, and he alone finds that the ways of life on those earlier levels have begun to pall upon him. The values and strivings of those past worlds no longer interest him save from an historical standpoint. Thus

[1] Jung uses *man* generically, as was the custom of his time.

> he has become "unhistorical" in the deepest sense and has estranged himself from the mass of men who live entirely within the bounds of tradition. Indeed, he is completely modern only when he has come to the very edge of the world, leaving behind him all that has been discarded and outgrown, and acknowledging that he stands before the Nothing out of which all may grow. (*CW* 10, par. 149*f*)
>
> . . . . An honest admission of modernity means voluntarily declaring oneself bankrupt, taking the vows of poverty and chastity in a new sense, and—what is still more painful—renouncing the halo of sanctity which history bestows. To be "unhistorical" is the Promethean sin, and in this sense the modern man is sinful. A higher level of consciousness is like a burden of guilt. But, as I have said, only the man who has outgrown the stages of consciousness belonging to the past, and has amply fulfilled the duties appointed for him by this world, can achieve full consciousness of the present. To do this he must be sound and proficient in the best sense—a man who has achieved as much as other people, and even a little more. It is these qualities which enable him to gain the next highest level of consciousness. (par. 152)

So, to be a modern person, according to Jung, means to be unhistorical. I understand that to mean that such a person is no longer contained in a tradition, which is the gist of history. In other words, the individual identity is no longer propped up by unconscious containment in a religious, cultural, or ethnic identification. The modern person is alone and without a myth.

When this state of affairs happens to a large number of people, it really causes a problem for society as a whole. And when that is the state of affairs, as it is today, the only viable solution—if one is not to revert or attempt to recover the lost heaven in some archaic, atavistic, regressive fundamentalism—is to extract the inner heaven from the psyche itself. This entails a confrontation with the unconscious, an activation of the process of individuation, through which one experiences a reconnection with that lost image of heaven, the God-image.

What Jung calls modernity began in the 16th century, and Paracelsus was one of its major progenitors. The consequence was the opening up of an inner conflict that Jung describes in *Aion* as a conflict between Christ and AntiChrist. For Paracelsus that conflict remained unconscious, though Jung speculates that the existence of that conflict in Paracelsus was the source of his astonishing energy during his forty-eight years of life. Jung says:

"Thus the lower heaven is a God-image
located in the unconscious;
it is the task of the ego to extract this image
through the process of active imagination.
When such an extraction is accomplished,
the person has a conscious encounter with the Self
. . . . The very nature of that ego changes forever:
It is no longer an ego-centered ego
but becomes a Self-centered ego
by virtue of this extraction procedure."

To me it seems certain that Paracelsus was just as unconscious of the full implications of these teachings as *Khunrath* was, who also believed he was speaking "without blasphemy." But in spite of this unconsciousness they were of the essence of philosophical alchemy, and anyone who practiced it, thought, lived, and acted in the atmosphere of these teachings, which perhaps had an all the more insidious effect the more naively and uncritically one succumbed to them. The "natural light of man" or the "star in man" sounds harmless enough, so that none of the authors had any notion of the possibilities of conflict that lurked within it. And yet that light or *filius philosophorum* [son of the philosopher] was openly named the greatest and most victorious of all lights, and set alongside Christ as the Savior and Preserver of the world! Whereas in Christ, God himself became man, the *filius philosophorum* was extracted from matter by human art and, by means of the opus, made into a new light-bringer. In the former case, the miracle of man's salvation is accomplished by God; in the latter, the salvation or transfiguration of the universe is brought about by the mind of man—*Deo concedente*, as the

> authors never fail to add. In the one case man confesses "I under God," in the other he asserts "God under me." Man takes the place of the Creator. Medieval alchemy prepared the way for the greatest intervention in the divine world order that man has ever attempted: alchemy was the dawn of the scientific age, when the daemon of the scientific spirit compelled the forces of nature to serve man to an extent that had never been known before. It was from the spirit of alchemy that Goethe wrought the figure of the "superman" Faust, and this superman led Nietzsche's Zarathustra to declare that God was dead and to proclaim the will to give birth to the superman, to "create a god for yourself out of your seven devils."
>
> . . . . The inner driving force behind the aspirations of alchemy was a presumption whose daemonic grandeur on the one hand and psychic danger on the other should not be underestimated. Much of the overbearing pride and arrogant self-esteem, which contrasts so strangely with the truly Christian humility of Paracelsus, comes from this source. (*CW* 13, par. 163*f*)

Jung explicitly states that Paracelsus had two mothers: the Church and nature:

> Even though he [Paracelsus] endeavored to conceal the conflict between the two maternal spheres of influence, he was honest enough to admit its existence. Thus he says "I also confess that I write like a pagan, but yet am a Christian." (*CW* 13, par. 148)

And in spite of the existence of the acknowledgment of that conflict, it still remained unconscious because he could blissfully go on his way and not reconcile the contrasting requirements of the two.

His work bore such fruitful consequences because it valued concentrating on the authenticity of one's *experience.* Faith was the operative principle of the bygone eon, and experience is going to be the principle of the coming eon. Paracelsus was a major exponent of the authenticity of experience, but he did not face fully the conflict that he had opened. Jung says:

> Though this liberating act had the most fruitful consequences, it also led to that conflict between knowledge and faith which poisoned the spiritual atmosphere of the nineteenth century in particular. Paracelsus naturally had no inkling of the possibility of these late repercussions. As a medieval Christian, he still lived

> in a unitary world and did not feel the two sources of knowledge, the divine and the natural, as the conflict it later turned out to be. (*CW* 13, par. 149)

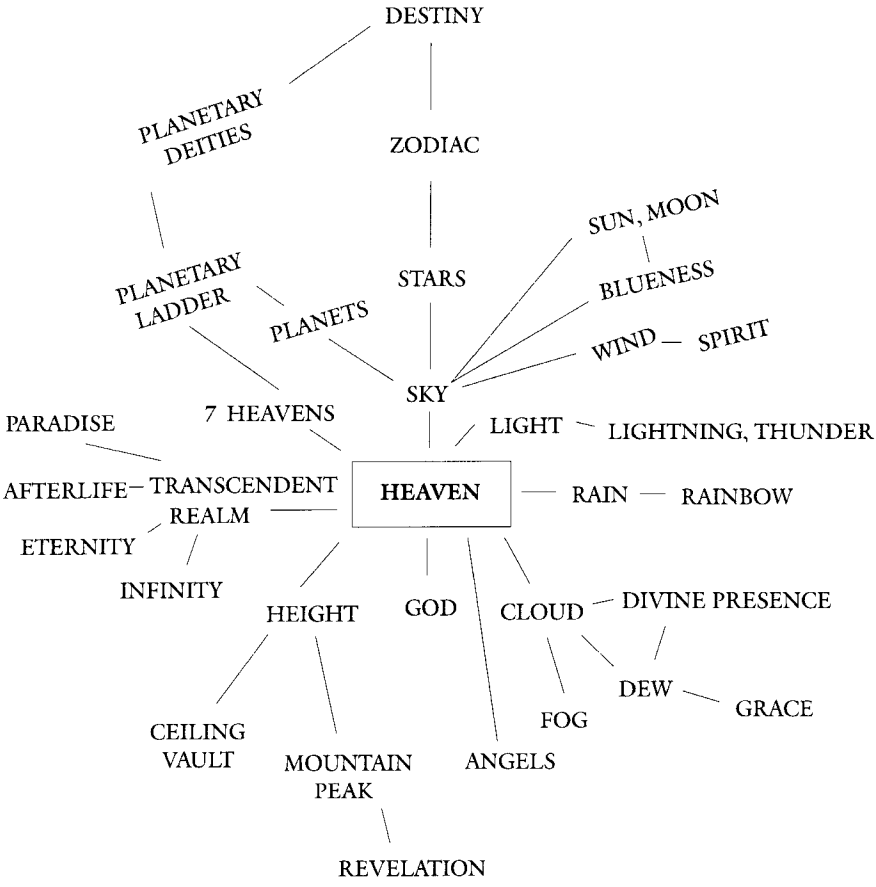
So this great movement in the collective psyche, which really got going in the 16th century and gained momentum in the succeeding centuries, had the effect of depositing the numinosum, which had fallen out of the sky, into matter and into nature. The result was that these areas became fascinating to people, and that fascination is what generated science. From my own earlier scientific period, I know that science really does have a religious foundation to it—a foundation that derives from the fact that the numinosum was now exerting its fascination from below—from the bowels of matter.

By the 19th century this simmering conflict between the light of the upper heaven and the light of the lower heaven became an open battle. The upper heaven, the sky, was no longer viewed as the abode of the deity. For example, in his poem "The Lid," Baudelaire wrote about seeing the sky as a harsh lid on a pressure cooker containing the whole human race, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, the ascetics and the libertines, all classes, all suffering the same fate, treading on this bloody ground. That is quite a change; the sky of heaven becomes a lid on a pressure cooker for the 19th-century poet.

The Psychological Meaning of the Lower Heaven

As I mentioned earlier, Jung found alchemy (in general) and Paracelsus (in particular) very helpful in assimilating his experiences of the collective unconscious. He came to understand alchemy as a projection of the unconscious psyche into matter:

> The real nature of matter was unknown to the alchemist: he knew it only in hints. Inasmuch as he tried to explore it, he projected the unconscious into the darkness of matter in order to illuminate it . . . . While working on his chemical experiments, the operator had certain psychic experiences which appeared to him as the particular behavior of the chemical process. Since it was a question of projection, he was naturally unconscious of the fact that the experience had nothing to do with matter itself . . . He experienced his projection as a property of matter; but what he was in reality experiencing was his own unconscious. (*CW* 12, par. 345)


DESTINY
PLANETARY DEITIES
ZODIAC
PLANETARY LADDER
PLANETS
STARS
SUN, MOON
BLUENESS
WIND — SPIRIT
SKY
PARADISE
7 HEAVENS
LIGHT
LIGHTNING, THUNDER
AFTERLIFE
TRANSCENDENT REALM
HEAVEN
RAIN
RAINBOW
ETERNITY
INFINITY
HEIGHT
GOD
CLOUD
DIVINE PRESENCE
DEW
GRACE
FOG
CEILING VAULT
MOUNTAIN PEAK
ANGELS
REVELATION

This statement applies very much to the remarkable recipe of Gerhard Dorn. Jung devotes a great deal of attention to it in his final chapter of the *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. Dorn was a disciple of Paracelsus and used much of his imagery, especially that of the lower heaven, or what Dorn called *caelum*. Dorn's elaborate recipe involved the extraction of this *caelum*, this lower heaven, out of matter as part of the process of achieving inner unity. Jung provides a succinct overview of this process:

> Production of the *caelum* is a symbolic rite performed in the laboratory [of Dorn]. Its purpose was to create, in the form of a substance, that "truth," that celestial balsam or light principle, which is identical with the God-image. Psychologically, it was a representation of the individuation process by means of chemical substances and procedures, or what we today call active imagination. (*CW* 14, par. 705)

Thus the lower heaven is a God-image located in the unconscious; it is the task of the ego to extract this image through the process of active imagination.

When such an extraction is accomplished, the person has a conscious encounter with the Self, a numinous experience, and at that point becomes *experientially*—not abstractly and theoretically—aware of the existence of the second transpersonal center of the psyche. This is the consequence of the extraction of the lower heaven. This is a decisive event when it happens, and it transforms whosoever's ego experiences it. The very nature of that ego changes forever: It is no longer an ego-centered ego but becomes a Self-centered ego by virtue of this extraction procedure.

Images of the lower heaven do show up in dreams. For example, I had such a dream many years ago—1960, to be exact. It was a brief and simple dream.

> I am examining a one-celled organism. It is just a blob of protoplasm, like an amoeba. As I look at it, I notice that its nucleus is missing. In its place is a hole that provides a glimpse into another world. As I peek through that hole, I see a patch of blue sky, heaven.

That is the whole dream. Upon awakening, the first thing I thought of was the rabbit hole in *Alice in Wonderland*. To me the one-celled amoeba, what I called "just a blob of protoplasm," represents organic existence at its most elementary, its most basic. Such a creature is concerned only with devouring

food and reproducing itself by simple division. I see an image of elemental desirousness—greedy, lusting protoplasm—the stuff of which all living organisms are made.

This dream came at a time when I was feeling in a hole. I was frustrated and resentful because I wanted some things I couldn't have. Another way of saying it is that my protoplasmic urges were being deprived. The dream seems to be saying that there is an empty hole at the center of a purely biological existence, but if one looks more closely through the hole, it becomes a window to another realm. As I pondered the dream after awakening, I thought of Jung's Liverpool dream and the mandala that he painted as a result. He said of that mandala, of that dream: "The whole thing seemed like a window opening into eternity."

I understand my dream to picture symbolically the transpersonal or eternal basis of our psychological existence. That transpersonal dimension is revealed to be at the very heart of our elemental desirousness, the very things that are labeled the so-called deadly sins: anger, pride, envy, greed, lust, sloth, and gluttony. The seven deadly sins. These are the characteristics of protoplasm—and the basic constituents of our fleshly being.

In the fifth chapter of Galatians, the apostle Paul appraised the works of the flesh:

> Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contention, jealousy, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambition, dissensions, heresies, envy, murder, drunkenness, rivalry, and the like. (Verses 19-21, *NKJV*)

All protoplasmic stuff. Yet my dream seems to be saying that a window into eternity lies at the very heart of this pool of iniquity. So how are we to understand that? I think we get a clue from a remark Jung makes in *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. This remark comes when he is interpreting an alchemical text concerning sulfur, which symbolizes (among other things) desirousness. He asks the question, what is behind all this desirousness? Then he answers the question: a thirsting for the eternal. (*CW* 14, par. 192) I think that is exactly what my dream is saying.

I understand the dream to mean that we encounter the transpersonal, the eternal dimension of existence, the inner heaven of Paracelsus, by penetrating consciously to the core, to the very springs of our protoplasmic libido, the pleasure and power drives of the infantile psyche—because these are driven by the energies of the primitive unconscious cell. They are

transpersonal energies in their essence that take on this destructive form only because they are manifesting through an unconscious ego, an ego that doesn't know its own transcendent nature. The ego that acts out these drives unconsciously is identified with the unconscious Self and thus is in a state of what we could call "psychological sin." But those same energies, when penetrated by consciousness, are perceived as having a transpersonal—heavenly—origin. And then they become life imperatives from the inner God-image. When they are lived out consciously, they have a totally different effect and totally different consequences.

In *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung describes this encounter with the unconscious god:

> He [the unconscious god] appears at first in hostile form, as an assailant with whom the hero must wrestle. This is in keeping with the violence of all unconscious dynamism. In this manner, the god manifests himself and in this form he must be overcome. The struggle has its parallel in Jacob's wrestling with the angel at the ford Jabbok. The onslaught of instinct then becomes an experience of divinity . . . . (par. 524)

That is the punch line. "The onslaught of instinct then becomes an experience of divinity"—provided that we do not succumb to it. That means we do not act it out blindly or follow it blindly. We must defend our humanity against the animal nature of divine power. Or, to put this another way, the onslaught of protoplasmic urges becomes an experience of the inner heaven, provided these urges are made conscious and thereby humanized. This is the reconciling, unifying, and healing alternative to depression.

Since primitive times, heaven has represented the dwelling place of the numinosum. It has been the spiritual realm, the abode of the gods, the plane of eternity and the infinite, as contrasted with our brief and painful life span. But that projection is now gone. This first withdrawal of the projection does not annul its psychic content, it merely—yet profoundly—changes its location.

Francis Thompson, the 19th-century poet, put it in these words:

> Not where the wheeling systems darken,
> And our benumbed conceiving soars!—
> The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
> Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The movements of the spirit now come from below, out of our own clay. For a truly modern person, as Jung uses the word *modern*, connection with the eternal transpersonal God-image is found not by looking out and up but by looking *down* and *in*, to what Paracelsus called the lower heaven. Nothing is more important than the search for that lower heaven.

Edward Edinger, M.D., is a Jungian analyst living in Los Angeles. His latest book is forthcoming from Chiron, The New God-Image: A Study of Jung's Key Letters Concerning the Evolution of the Western God-Image.

I would like to thank Frank Burt for transcribing my presentation.

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